

**WELFARE REFORM IMPLEMENTATION
TASK FORCE
MEETING**

December 2, 2006

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Linda Katz at 9:10 a.m. Members were introduced and Linda noted that there were a number of new members from various community based organizations who had become interested in the task force as a result of the community informational forums carried out during the fall to educate human services staff from CBO's, advocates and consumers about the various changes in DHS programs and policies related to FIP, Child Care and Rite Care. She explained that these forums were offered by the RIC Poverty Institute and Parents for Progress. Linda welcomed all new members to the Task Force.

REPORT ON PARENTS CLOSED DUE TO TIME LIMITS

Diane Cook gave a brief report on a small study she had conducted during the spring to outreach to approximately 300 parents who had closed the FIP cash assistance primarily due to time limits. Diane explained that the effort which entailed a mailing of DLT netWORKri

brochures describing the many services available to assist with finding a job was to try to connect these parents to DLT offices for services. The study was a sample follow up of 50 of these cases to see if any of the parents took advantage of the information provided them through this outreach effort. The results were that of the sampled (50) cases, a very small number were confirmed as having used networkri and even fewer found employment. She emphasized that the project was only a small test of a strategy to contact individuals who lost FIP cash assistance for themselves due to time limits but whose children remained on FIP as child only cases.

After brief discussion on the population of timed-off parents, Linda suggested that a workgroup be formed to examine how best to work with this population. A sign-up sheet was circulated and Donaldda was charged to set up the first meeting of the work group. She stated that she would plan a time for the group to meet sometime during the second week of January.

OVERVIEW OF THE TANF WORK VERIFICATION PLAN

Donaldda Carlson distributed copies of the Rhode Island TANF Work Verification Plan to members and explained that this was a new mandate resulting from the reauthorization of TANF under the Deficit Reduction Act of 2006. She explained that Rhode Island submitted its WVP on September 27, 2006 in accord with TANF Interim Regulations to HHS Administration for Children and Families and she highlighted

the five major components in the Plan and how Rhode Island addressed these components which were:

- Countable Work Activities
- Hours Individual is Engaged in work
- Work Eligible Individuals
- Internal Controls
- Verification of other data used in calculating the work participation rates

Because the new requirements under TANF Interim Rules became effective October 1, 2006 Donalda reviewed a set of action steps already taken to insure that Rhode Island was in compliance with regulations. She further explained that states would received comments back on their Work Verification Plans before the end of December and based on those comments, would have up to sixty days to respond, change, or amend their WVP as appropriate. She offered to provide an update at the next WRITF meeting in January on what comments and issues the Administration for Children and Families sent.

UPDATES ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RECENT POLICIES

Randy Rosati, who was not able to present his data reports at this meeting, had sent a summary report on full family sanction cases

to-date.

Additionally, Donalda provided information on the most recent data related to counting time in other states.

Tom Dalton and Debra Borst who represent field operations gave a brief update on how the testing and plan as a condition of eligibility were going, both indicating that which the process is new to everyone that there have not been any major issues or problems.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Linda Katz announced that DHS Director Ronald Lebel has announced his retirement to take effect in late December. She asked the DHS staff to convey that in behalf of the WRITF, she wished to express her thanks to Ron for his support of the Task Force over the many years and to wish him well in the future.

There being no other business to report, the meeting ended at 11:05 a.m.

DMC